



## LEBANON DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION COMMISSION

JUNE 17, 2025 - 6:00 PM

COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CITY HALL OR  
REMOTE VIA VIRTUAL PLATFORM  
LEBANONNH.GOV/LIVE

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**1. Call to Order**

The June 17, 2025, Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Commission (DEI) Meeting is hereby called to order.

**2. Approval of Minutes**

A. May 20, 2025

**3. Old Business: None**

**4. New Business**

A. Environmental Justice Task Force Report

B. Update on Status of HB 511, Anti-Sanctuary Act, and City Code Chapter 185 Welcoming Lebanon

C. After Action on Taste and Traditions – Lebanon’s Multicultural Celebration

D. Juneteenth Update

**5. Open to the Public**

Any member of the public who desires to speak on any item may do so when the item is taken up by the Commission and will be allowed to speak on the subject for not more than three minutes. (Note: Speakers are asked to state their name, ward of residence, and to use the microphone provided.)

**6. Future Agenda Items**

**7. Other Business: None**

**8. Adjournment**

Meetings are open for in-person and remote attendance. Members of the public who wish to attend remotely may do so by going to [LebanonNH.gov/Live](https://lebanonnh.gov/live) where you will find instructions on how to enter the meeting. Members of the public will be able to participate and ask questions through the City’s virtual platform or by phone. Please note: Should technical difficulties occur during the meeting that disrupt virtual or phone connection(s), the meeting will continue without remote access capabilities.

Any person with a disability who wishes to attend this public meeting and needs additional accommodation, please contact the ADA coordinator at City Hall by calling 603-448-4220 at least 72 hours in advance so that the City can make any necessary arrangements.

DRAFT

**CITY OF LEBANON**  
**DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION COMMISSION**  
**May 20, 2025— 6:00pm**  
**COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CITY HALL or**  
Remote Via Microsoft Teams: LebanonNH.gov/LIVE

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Richard Ford Burley (Secretary); Keiselim Montas (Public Representative); Simone Whitecloud (Public Representative Alternate acting as Public Representative); Devin Wilkie (City Council Representative); Tia Winter (Vice-Chair as Acting Chair)

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Bise Wood Saint Eugene (Chair); Karen Zook (City Council Alternate)

**STAFF PRESENT:** City Manager Shaun Mulholland (via telepresence); Deputy City Manager David Brooks

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2  
3 **1. CALL TO ORDER**

4  
5 The May 20, 2025 meeting of the Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Commission (DEI) was called to  
6 order by Acting Chair Tia Winter at 6:02pm.  
7

8 **2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

9  
10 *A MOTION by Keyselim Montas that the DEI Commission approve the minutes of the April*  
11 *15, 2025 meeting of the DEI Commission as presented.*

12  
13 *Seconded by City Councilor Devin Wilkie.*

14  
15 *\*The Motion was passed unanimously.*

16  
17 **3. OLD BUSINESS**

18  
19 No old business was discussed.

20  
21 **4. NEW BUSINESS**

22  
23 **A. Taste and Traditions – Lebanon’s Multicultural Celebration**

24  
25 Meagan Henry presented via telepresence. The Celebration currently has 7 performers, 2  
26 demonstrations, and 9 vendors. She asked whether Commission members would be able  
27 volunteer, to set up, staff a table, etc. Councilor Wilkie, Secretary Ford Burley, and Acting Chair  
28 Winter will attend. Ms. Henry indicated that the Celebration was still looking for sponsors. Upon

29 suggestions, she will reach out to the Dorothy Byrne Foundation and Upper Valley Business  
30 Alliance.

31

32 **B. Update on Status of HB 511, Anti-Sanctuary Act, and City Code Chapter 185**

33 **Welcoming Lebanon**

34

35 City Manager Shaun Mulholland informed the Commission that the act has passed both houses  
36 and will be signed by the Governor shortly. The effective date will be January 1, 2026.

37

38 Kathy Beckett, Ward 2, cowriter of the ordinance, spoke via telepresence on the history of the  
39 welcoming Lebanon ordinance, urging public input on any changes.

40

41 Councilor Devin Wilkie suggested the Commission keep it on its agenda.

42

43 **C. Update on the Citywide Proposed Equity Plan**

44

45 Councilor Devin Wilkie spoke briefly on the challenges of producing an equity plan in the  
46 present environment, including concerns that recommendations could expose some of the most  
47 vulnerable in the community to further threats. Representative Montas expressed a desire to  
48 continue with the plan. Acting Chair Winter suggested that efforts continue in ways that may not  
49 drawing attention to those with less privilege than others. Councilor Wilkie added that a more  
50 nimble and responsive approach might be favorable compared to a set plan. The Commission  
51 will take a step back from the equity plan until the fall.

52

53 **D. Environmental Justice Task Force Report Update**

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55 Councilor Wilkie reported that a rough draft of the plan has been finalized, and has been sent out  
56 to City departments for input. It will be sent out to boards and commissions for input in June, and  
57 hopefully to Commission members in the next week, for full consideration at the June meeting.  
58 The hope is that the DEI Commission would support it when it comes before the City Council.

59

60 **E. Juneteenth Update**

61

62 Acting Chair Winter reported that the celebration will be at Lyman Park on Saturday June 21.  
63 Bethel will also be joining, making it a Hartford-Lebanon-Bethel joint celebration. The next  
64 steering meeting will take place at White River Junction City Hall on Thursday, May 29.  
65 Lebanon’s DEI Commission will have a table. Acting Chair Winter will coordinate  
66 decorations/banners etc.

67

68 **F. Housing Task Force Update**

69

70 Acting Chair Winter reported that the contractors the Task Force is employing will be launching  
71 a housing story tool and setting up displays in July. They will also organize focus groups in the  
72 fall. Additionally, someone from the Lebanon Housing Authority wanted to alert the  
73 Commission about SB 81, a bill that would set aside funds for affordable housing, so that

74 Commission members might urge Lebanon legislators to support it and help to get some of that  
75 funding to Lebanon.

76

77 **5. OPEN TO THE PUBLIC**

78

79 Taylor Maine appeared via telepresence. She works for ACLU NH, covering Grafton and Coos  
80 Counties. Ms. Maine introduced herself and expressed a desire to connect. Will reach out via  
81 email to Commission members.

82

83 **6. OTHER BUSINESS**

84

85 No other business was discussed.

86

87 **7. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

88

89 Suggestions for future agenda items included a Taste and Traditions follow-up discussion,  
90 discussion of the upcoming Environmental Justice Task Force’s report, a discussion on the  
91 Welcoming Lebanon Ordinance and any possible updates or changes, and a last-minute update  
92 on the upcoming Juneteenth celebration.

93

94 **8. ADJOURNMENT**

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96 Acting Chair Tia Winter adjourned the meeting at 6:41pm.

97

98

99 Respectfully submitted,

100 Richard Ford Burley, DEI Commission Secretary

Agenda Item: Environmental Justice Task Force report

Starting in July 2023, representatives from Lebanon’s City Council; Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Commission; Conservation Commission; Tree Advisory Board; Lebanon Energy Advisory Commission (LEAC); and Sustainable Lebanon formed a task force and began meeting regularly to explore and develop the concept of Environmental Justice as it relates to the City of Lebanon. This task force met monthly and sought input and suggestions from City departments, external stakeholders, and its own members. From there it developed a list of recommendations, which it spent considerable time developing, organizing, and prioritizing based on the capacity of the City and the value to the community.

The resulting draft report is enclosed. The task force hopes to present a final report to the Lebanon City Council in the third quarter of 2025, and this report would be most impactful if supported by the endorsement of each of its constituent organizations. The task force is therefore requesting an endorsement from the DEI Commission for this report. It also welcomes comments or suggestions, though those will be most helpful if brief, specific, and provided to a task force member no later than June 20, 2025.

PROPOSED ACTION if the board supports the report as written:

MOVED, that the Lebanon Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Commission hereby endorses the Environmental Justice report as presented to the commission in its June 17, 2025 packet, and recommends its adoption by the Lebanon City Council.

# Responsible Governance and the Environment

or

## City Projects Serve All Residents

Environmental Justice report - City of Lebanon

### Introduction

In the fall of 2023, the City Council approved a Strategic Plan that mandated (a) the definition of and (b) the development of a plan regarding environmental justice as it relates to the operations of the City of Lebanon. Members of the DEI Commission, Tree Advisory Board, Sustainable Lebanon, and Conservation Commission have worked since that time to fulfil that mandate, meeting with City officials and departmental staff, and seeking input from external experts and members of the public, including some of the City’s most vulnerable residents, with the result being the following report.

The report begins with an Executive Summary that includes the definition of “environmental justice” as it pertains to the city, then breaks down recommendations into six Focus Areas: Shelter, Access to Nature, Environmental Quality, Ecological Protections, Community Resiliency, and Transportation. Within each Category are several Priority Recommendations, as well as Additional Recommendations, all of which together serve to improve the quality of life of the City’s residents and community members, helping us to better live in harmony with the natural and built environments and each other.

While the specifics of implementation are and should be up to the members of the City Council, we, the authors of this report, stand by these recommendations, and believe that they will lead to a fairer and better City of Lebanon for those that live and work here, today and into the future.

## Executive Summary

For the purposes of this report, the City of Lebanon defines “environmental justice” as follows:

Environmental justice is the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all Lebanon community members—regardless of race, skin color, national or ethnic origin, cultural group, language, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, mental or physical ability, age, religious or political opinion or activity, economic status, immigration status, or housing status—in decisions that affect their access to and quality of interaction with the natural environment. For environmental justice to be achieved, three aspects must be considered: (1) distribution of environmental risks, (2) access to environmental benefits, and (3) involvement in the policy, investment, and advocacy decisions made affecting or related to environmental issues. Protection from environmental risks and access to environmental benefits should be fair and equitable, and the decision-making processes surrounding environmental issues should meaningfully involve those who stand to be affected.

The distribution of environmental risks refers to how the negative effects of environmental hazards—such as pollution, climate change, toxic waste, or harmful chemical exposure—are spread across different communities, particularly those that are socioeconomically disadvantaged or belong to minoritized groups and are thus least able to afford the costs of these negative effects.

This issue is crucial because when certain communities face higher exposure to pollution, industrial waste, or climate-related disasters like flooding or heat waves, often due to their geographic location or work conditions, it deepens social and health disparities. Achieving environmental justice involves addressing these inequities and ensuring that every group is equally protected from environmental harm.

Access to environmental benefits refers to ensuring that all communities can enjoy the positive aspects of a healthy environment, such as clean air, clean water, green spaces, renewable energy, and a resilient ecosystem. Often, wealthier or more privileged communities have better access to these benefits, while disadvantaged groups face limited resources, fewer parks, polluted air, or unsafe water. This also includes access to public resources including the funding to make improvements in the environment.

Having access to these benefits is crucial for people's well-being. It improves physical health, such as reducing respiratory problems from polluted air, and supports mental health by providing stress relief through exposure to green spaces. Achieving environmental justice means guaranteeing that everyone, regardless of their socioeconomic background, has equal access to these positive environmental outcomes

Involvement in Policy, Investment, and Advocacy Decisions emphasizes the importance of participatory decision-making in environmental matters. It calls for the inclusion of communities—particularly those most affected by environmental issues—in the processes where policies are made, investments are directed, and advocacy efforts are planned. This includes not just being consulted, but actively shaping decisions about environmental regulations, land use, energy infrastructure, and climate adaptation strategies.

Historically, marginalized communities have often been excluded from decision-making processes about environmental issues that directly impact them. They may lack representation in government bodies, have limited influence over corporate decisions, or struggle to advocate for their own interests. True environmental justice cannot be achieved without the voices of these communities being heard and valued in decisions that affect their lives.

This report consists of six Focus Areas, each of which is a vital component of environmental justice as defined above and each of which will be discussed in the following pages, alongside recommendations to help the City move toward that vision.

Of all the Focus Areas, one that invites special attention is Shelter. In the absence of adequate shelter, every so-called “environmental issue” becomes a deeply personal issue. When the “natural environment” is a person’s daily environment, inconveniences like heat, cold, rain, and snow can become life-threatening. For this reason, these recommendations have been placed first.

The rest of the Focus Areas have been presented in no particular order. Access to Nature focuses on the ability of all of the City’s residents to not only enjoy the natural environment, but to benefit from it. Recommendations include green space access via public transit and enshrining the development-to-nature ratio in the city’s future plans.

Environmental Quality focuses on the quality of both the indoor and outdoor environments, with recommendations concerning contaminants like lead and radon as well as limitations on harmful particulate matter in the air.

Ecological Protections focuses on the ways the City's residents interact with the natural environment, with recommendations aimed at maintaining that environment for present and future generation of Lebanonians to enjoy and benefit from.

Community Resiliency focuses on the intersection of human needs and the changing environment, and the recommendations in this section are aimed at strengthening Lebanon's communities against real and potential harms.

Finally, Transportation affects so many of the above Focus Areas that it deserved its own. Transportation affects not only the ability of community members to access the environment, but also contributes to the quality of that environment in many overlapping ways. Recommendations concerning both private and public transportation are covered in this section.

A final note of some importance: the City of Lebanon is best able to serve its communities when it can establish strong policies and regulations; thus, a central recommendation of this report is that green space protections and environmental impact regulations must be developed in such a way that they may be enforced. Without this power, Lebanon cannot guarantee that it will be able to pursue these goals and recommendations and must rely on the mere aspiration that other private entities will voluntarily support and adhere to them.

A list of institutional stakeholders and potential partners is provided at the conclusion of each Focus Area.

## Shelter

Shelter is the most tangible way in which people interact with environmental risks, as it provides protection from harmful elements of the environment. While a comprehensive analysis of housing equity is beyond the scope of this report, there are some actions that may be considered to expand environmental justice in the area of shelter.

### Priority Areas

- Create a full minimum housing code with inspections; a minimum housing officer and staff for enforcement; and a switch from a reactionary posture to an active and preventative effort to maintain the quality of housing units in the city
- Create more robust tenant protections, to allow tenants to feel safe in reporting unsafe housing without threat of displacement
- Repeal the camping ban, City Code §49
- Provide accessible shelter options for unhoused people, including:
  - a permanent, year-round shelter
  - micro-dwellings as transitional solutions



### Additional Recommendations

- Eliminate regulations requiring a minimum number of parking spaces for dwellings close to transit stops to facilitate affordable housing development, improved air quality, and access to public transportation
- Create policies and initiatives to protect the belongings of unhoused people, especially vital records required to access services and access employment, such as supervised storage sites and distribution of waterproof document bags, backpacks, etc.
- Establish standard and widely-publicized hours for warming and cooling spaces for vulnerable persons
- Establish and implement a “cumulative effect” rule for FEMA regulations, to avoid the situation where developers repeatedly replace less than 50% of a site, until a whole building is functionally replaced but still noncompliant with modern housing standards

Institutional Stakeholders and Potential Partners: City Planning and Development Dept., Fire Department, City Human Services, The Upper Valley Haven, Grafton County Senior Citizens Council

## Access to Nature

A just society seeks to ensure all people have access to environmental benefits. Natural resources are among the major attractions of the Upper Valley, and communities should strive to ensure those resources are accessible to all.

### Priority Areas

- Create and maintain accessibility to green spaces via public transit stops, for disabled people, and for unhoused people
- Ensure that the planning goal for development to be limited to 20% of Lebanon's area, with the remaining 80% preserved as open space, remains in the master plan

### Additional Recommendations

- Research the construction of a trail from the river near the water treatment facility up to South Main Street, in the area of Romano circle. Access could be increased for fishing/hiking/biking. (A trail would also be beneficial for treatment plant staff to access a sewer line.)
- Plan a new site for public access to the Connecticut river, if they do go ahead with the well
- Add the creation of a more comprehensive citywide Dark Skies Policy to the City's Strategic Plan



Institutional Stakeholders and Potential Partners: City Conservation Commission, City Water and Waste Water Treatment Departments, City Planning and Development Dept., City Recreation, Arts and Parks Department, Planning Board

## Environmental Quality

Environmental justice includes ensuring protections for the natural environment. Contaminants can cause significant harm to vulnerable populations and often are not distributed evenly among different groups.

### Priority Areas

- Mitigate or phase out the use of small, gas-powered internal combustion engine devices (e.g., yard trimmers, snow blowers/throwers, lawn mowers, etc.) by City Departments, in favor of sustainable alternatives.
- Take steps to make lead-licensed contractors easier to find for owners of older buildings
- Implement stronger oversight and disclosure for mold, lead, radon, and other contaminants in older residential dwellings, as well as required disclosure by landlords in residential rental units.
- Make free/cheap soil testing kits available to test garden soils for lead levels, and promote education including hosting a [soilSHOP event with the NHDES APPLETREE team](#)



### Additional Recommendations

- Create a policy to limit City use of leaf blowers when healthier alternatives exist.
- Recommend the creation of plans to mitigate or phase out the use of small, gas-powered internal combustion engine devices in the city (e.g., yard trimmers, leaf blowers, snow blowers/throwers, lawn mowers, etc.), such as incentive/disincentive schemes, and promote sustainable alternatives
- Increase education about the ecological and human wellness harms of using leaf blowers, to preserve soil health and air quality.
- Continue to focus on PFAS detection / mitigation steps already underway
- Since majority of local PFAS contamination comes from household products, inform households of ways to avoid releasing PFAS into the water

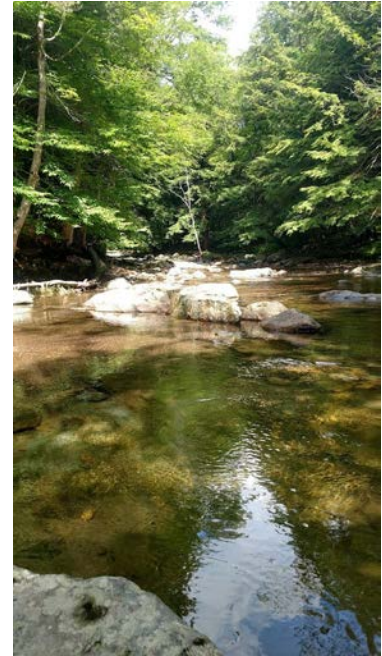
Institutional Stakeholders and Potential Partners: City Public Works Dept., City Recreation, Arts and Parks, City Planning and Development Dept.

## Ecological Protections

In order for community members to benefit from and enjoy continued access to the natural environment, that environment must be managed and maintained sustainably, even as the City of Lebanon continues to develop.

### Priority Areas

- When making efforts to secure a secondary water source, do so in the most environmentally friendly way possible.
- Create wildlife corridor protections in Zoning Ordinance and Site Plan Review Regulations, as well as the Complete Streets Program. (Currently the only mention of “wildlife corridors” is in Section 501.1.E.1.a.i of the Zoning Ordinance, requiring that planned unit developments (PUDs) conditional use permit (CUP) applications contain a site or subdivision plan that delineates wildlife corridors, as “environmentally sensitive areas of high resource value.”)
- Determine the best ways to create safe and effective wildlife crossings, including widening culverts under busy roads such as 120, and implement them as soon as possible. part of any further development of the area.



### Institutional Stakeholders and Potential Partners

City Public Works Dept., City Planning and Development Dept., Conservation Commission

## Community Resiliency

When systems fail to meet the needs of a population, those with the least privilege are typically the first to experience harm. Thus, environmental justice should seek to ensure communities are adequately able to address those needs.

### Priority Areas

- Continue to work with the LEAC Lebanon Energy Savings Subcommittee to facilitate the access by residential households, especially those experiencing high energy burden, to federal and state rebates and incentives for switching from using fossil fuels to more efficient, cost saving, electric heating and appliances, as well as weatherization programs.
- Implement and incentivize, where applicable, diversion of recyclables and organic waste from the landfill, including requirements for landlords to provide recycling and composting options

### Additional Recommendations

- Create a city-run solid waste pickup solution for low-income, disabled, and non-driving residents. Ideally, this would be universal curbside pickup, but at the very least a pilot program for people who cannot get rid of their solid waste themselves. An alternative could consist of occasional additional dropoff locations for rubbish and/or recycling.
- Prioritize infill development near existing stops on transit routes whenever possible to prevent sprawl.
- Re-examine water rates for multi-unit buildings as a way to potentially help lower-income households
- Create an emergency infrastructure repair fund so that high-cost sudden repairs (e.g., major washouts) don't use up funds necessary to provide regular maintenance
- Create policies in which retrofitting older neighborhoods more easily triggers regulatory review, to better tackle increased risks of flash flooding
- Explore potential subsidies for residential water infrastructure upgrades to protect against lead and other contaminants.



Institutional Stakeholders and Potential Partners: Lebanon Energy Advisory Committee, City Planning and Development Dept., City Public Works, LISTEN, Cover, City Manager's Office, Vital Communities

## Transportation

Access to both the benefits of the environment and protection from environmental harms requires transportation. This area includes not only private vehicles but also public transit, bicycle paths, and pedestrian infrastructure. These resources should be equitably maintained to ensure broad access is available.

### Priority Areas

- Commission a study, with a goal of potential implementation, of microtransit to allow for public transportation in areas not served by fixed routes.
- Add new shade trees and bus stop shelters along pedestrian routes, and update Site Plan Review Regulations Section 6.2.E to include mandatory shading requirements specifically for disabled parking spots
- Create a comprehensive e-bike policy for the City, with input from Planning, Ped-Bike, and DEI Commission, to expand equitable adoption, charging access, and route safety (for cyclists and pedestrians alike)
- Prioritize public transit and multimodal transport over single-occupant vehicles to reduce pollution and traffic congestion, including pilot projects converting some existing rights of way into limited access ROWs to give priority to pedestrians, cyclists, and public transit.
- Create restrictions on idling internal combustion engine vehicles



### Additional Recommendations

- Establish additional multimodal transport paths in the City
- Continue work with the LEAC EV Subcommittee to expand access to EV charging sites for renters and low-income households
- Establish parking fees in high-demand areas to reduce parking scarcity and decrease driving-around time
- Research and potentially implement ways that the Airport could incentivize airplane owners to switch away from leaded aviation fuel ahead of the FAA's EAGLE (Eliminate Aviation Gasoline Lead Emissions) goal of 2030
- Create programs to support and encourage car-sharing, public transit, and alternative transportation

Institutional Stakeholders and Potential Partners: City Planning and Development Dept., City Planning Board, Pedestrian and Bicyclist Advisory Committee, Upper Valley Lake Sunapee Regional Planning Commission, Tree Advisory Board, Advance Transit, Lebanon Energy Advisory Committee Electric Vehicle Subcommittee, Lebanon Municipal Airport, Vital Communities